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ABSTRACT

The purposes and approaches of faculty development are discussed, along with specific college faculty development programs. A model for examining such activities and a framework for designing and implementing a faculty development workshop are also examined. Popular faculty development efforts include: faculty mentors for new faculty, conferences or seminars on the theories and concepts underlying teaching, grant or leave programs, and newsletters and articles on college instruction. A chart distinguishes between low and high risk types of faculty development activities in terms of such factors as whether attendance is voluntary, whether the faculty needs to be passive or active, and moderate or high time requirements. Low risk activities are those familiar to individual faculty that are not perceived as a threat to their competency or ego. Starting faculty development efforts that are low risk helps to gain credibility and support for any type of program. Gradually, a more collaborative approach to faculty and institutional development can be put into action. A workshop for faculty that responds to their needs is one way to start a faculty development program. In addition to issues in planning a faculty development workshop, content that might be included in a workshop on adult students is identified. (SW)

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IN THE 80'S

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IN THE 80'S

"Teaching is....Innate, Content-Less, Knowing the Subject Well, Personal Brilliance, and the Price for Doing the Faculty's Own Work: Research. In addition, Bad Teaching Can't Hurt Good Students."

These opinions about teaching, described by Paul Lacey (1983) as the "myths" surrounding the art of instruction, have influenced how colleges perceive their role in assisting faculty develop their teaching skills. Yet, "faculty development" has emerged as a buzzword in the 70's and 80's to describe a myriad of activities all designed to "do something" about the perception that students aren't learning and teachers aren't teaching. This paper will examine the purposes and approaches of faculty development, describe actual faculty development programs, introduce a model for examining such activities, and provide a framework for designing a faculty development workshop.

Before examining the issue of faculty development, however, we must first define the term "faculty." Although also used to classify instructors who may be teaching non-credit courses on a part-time basis, in this paper we will be referring to those individuals who are <u>full-time college</u> or <u>university teaching staff.</u> Although the methods discussed here could be generalized to other populations, the impetus and incentive structure for development of part-time staff may be different enough to warrant

a separate analysis.

Now that we know who we're talking about, what does the term faculty development mean? Jerry Gaff (1975) has indicated that there are three types of activities that assist in improving the instruction in an institution: Faculty Development focuses on the individual faculty members to promote their growth and acquire knowledge, skills, sensitivities and techniques related to teaching and learning; Instruction Development focuses on curriculum to improve student learning, prepare learning materials, redesign courses and make instruction systematic; Organization Development, on the other hand, views the institution as its focus and strives to create an effective environment for teaching and learning, improve interpersonal relationships, enhance team functioning, and create policies that support effective teaching and learning. As we will see later, it is difficult to separate these concepts when describing various faculty development activities, but the ultimate purpose of all activities should remain clear: to improve the ability of the faculty, the curriculum, and the institution to provide the highest quality of instruction for its constituency, the students.

But why the emphasis on faculty development now? Does it mean that somehow the standards for hiring teaching faculty have been lessened? Does it mean that the students are being evaluated after graduation from college and found lacking? Or does it mean that societal and institutional changes warrant a

re-examination of how we're teaching our students.

One reason for addressing this issue is the change in the makeup of the college student population. In the 1970's, there was a 66% increase in part-time students, a 70% increase in students 25-34 years of age, and a 77% increase in the 35+ year old student population. It is also predicted that in the 80's there will be a 1.1 million increase in the 25+ year college student population, and a 30% decrease in the less than 25 year old college student (National Center for Education Statistics, 1984; Frankel, 1984).

Gaff (1975) cites a number of reasons why faculty development programs are increasingly important:

(1) Faculty members are the most important resource of an institution and their value in terms of talents, skills and interests must be systematically cultivated;

(2) Teaching is their primary activity and a major reason why faculty choose to work in a college or university; and

(3) Teaching is traditionally neglected by academic units, not due to the lack of interest by teachers, but by other pervading factors such as lack of teaching preparation in graduate school, relative lack of in-service education, and the lack of academic policies (i.e. promotion, tenure, salary) which supportive effective teaching.

Joseph Lowman, author of Mastering the Techniques of

Teaching (1984), indicate that college professors and institutions should strive for excellence in teaching because it will attract the best students to their field and therefore invest in the future of their discipline; it is more rewarding and stimulating to do something well rather than mediocre; and, lastly, good teaching will produce its own personal reward.

Given then the belief that it's worthwhile to address the issue of developing college and university faculty capabilities, what has been developed and implemented and what have we learned from these approaches? One such effort, the Project on Institutional Renewal Through the Improvement of Teaching (PIRIT) was a three-year project involving sixteen college and universities in a common search for ways to improve teaching and the revitilization of institutions. Supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, participant institutions tried a variety of techniques to develop their faculty (Gaff, 1978):

o Skills Training--workshops and seminars were conducted on applied teaching techniques, interpersonal skills, empathy training, and small group dynamics.

o Student Evaluation of Teaching--efforts to give individual faculty detailed feedback to improve their performance and also to increase attention to teaching in promotion, tenure, and salary evaluations.

o Consultation and Counseling--both internal and external

faculty have been used to advise faculty, or departments, about possible improvements. "Master Learners", a very innovative program at State University of New York at Stony Brook used faculty to model good learning behavior in classes and provide feedback for their colleagues. As well, there has been an increased activity among campuses of "Employee Assistance Programs", designed to refer or counsel staff with concerns, to act as referral resources to faculty with teaching needs.

Walter Barker (1983) describes the Lilly Endowment's Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows Program, a year-long intensive program on curriculum and teaching improvement implemented on a number of campuses, as having a "ripple" effect since not only 10% of the faculty of his institution would have completed the program, but they are in positions of influence and many are responsible for supervising the graduate teaching assistants. Lowman (1984) also reports that counseling and developing the skills of graduate students may be the most efficient and effective way of improving our colleges' teaching capabilities in the long-run.

Other types of faculty development programs sponsored by universities and individual departments include "mentors"--a one-on-one relationship between a new college teacher and another faculty member who has been identified as willing and able to "coach" the new professors in more effective teaching methods. Another common program is a conference or seminar in which panel discussions and paper presentations on the theories and concepts

underlying teaching are reviewed (Lacey, 1983). Also common are grant or leave programs designed to assist faculty to study another discipline or develop other competencies. These development leaves and incentives, however, have primarily been granted to individuals for work outside the field of teaching or instructional improvement. Newsletters and articles written on college teaching are also popular faculty development efforts.

What have we learned from these programs about what has worked and what hasn't? The PIRIT program has summarized the conclusions of its 16 participating institutions (Gaff & Justice, 1978):

o Teaching improvement is possible across all levels and areas of a university;

o Teaching improvement programs can be begun using only the people and resources that are already available on virtually any campus, disputing the belief that large amounts of outside assistance and funding are necessary for effective change;

o It is very difficult, but necessary, to change an institution;

o Institutional renewal is also possible, even in times of retrenchment;

o A national project can serve as a catalyst and resource in faculty development, but should be considered temporary; an institution can initiate programs on its own for faculty

development;

o Faculty development programs, even if directed solely toward individuals, can benefit the institution as well; and

o Programs that utilize administrators and students in strategizing for change gained more support and long-lasting change.

Other programs not associated with the PIRIT project have also learned lessons about ways to increase the chances that faculty development efforts will succeed in their goals. The Learning Research Center at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville recommend strongly that persuasion as a method of influencing faculty to participate in development efforts is the only tactic to employ; they also strongly support the use of an advisory committee of students, faculty, and administrators. (Milton, 1971). Stanford Ericksen (1984) recommends that initiators of faculty development programs appeal to the "research" mentality of faculty by first establishing credibility in the research field. Ingrid Moses of Australia (1985) describes the efforts there as being successful only when high-ranking staff were involved, and there was clear institutional support for the efforts. She warns against lectures on "how to learn" and compulsory attendance as being a waste of the university's time. Her summary of "what faculty want" from a workshop are helpful to instructional designers as well: To get information; to learn about other teaching methods, their advantages and disadvantages, and who has used what; practical

advice; prescriptive guidelines; a sense of purpose and direction; a supportive group climate; and active involvement and achievement.

Paul Lacey (1983) adds that any programs should take faculty's intellectual commitments very seriously and grant their discipline the respect it deserves. He cautions against consultants designing the program, rather than it initiating from the faculty. He suggests that to appeal to the faculty's need for prestige and low risk, the program might utilize the familiar conference where a keynote speaker and panel discuss college teaching and learning issues. This directly contradicts much of the other authors' observations that lectures and discussions do not have much impact on the professor's teaching skills in the classroom, yet it may be a tool for gaining credibility and entrance into a system.

Jerry Gaff (1983) recommends that organic change efforts should be used to design faculty development programs. They should concentrate on how things can be better, not where they went wrong; they should be action-oriented and lead to specific steps; the program should be rooted in the reality of the individuals and foster concrete discussions; a nucleus of individuals with influence and commitment should be utilized; the program should recognize that change is evolutionary, not revolutionary; and that a low profile is recommended to build support without resistance. He suggests that programs start out by doing a few things very well and working with the least

resistant group of faculty. At the same time, he acknowledges that this approach is very slow, but as most change literature would show, "quick and dirty" or flashy programs rarely have any long-lasting impact.

J. D. Maguire (1971) seems to summarize the literature surrounding successful faculty development efforts in his article on "Strategies for Academic Reform":

o Proposals for change should be modifications of existing practices, not radical departures.

o Agreement around priorities are crucial among the group initiating change.

o The push for change should be gradual.

o Alumni and other "marginal" members of the institution should be enlisted for their support and assistance.

o Research and development should not be ignored while concentrating on implementation of faculty development efforts.

In order to summarize the work on faculty development, attached as Table A is a chart that places different types of activities on a continuum of low to high risk. As you will note, the types of activities that are considered low risk are those that are familiar to individual faculty members and that won't necessarily be perceived as a threat to their competency or ego. These activities are also the ones that may produce only short-

TABLE A

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

	LOW RISK ⟶	HIGH RISK
PURPOSE	AWARENESS KNOWLEDGE	AFFECTIVE/ ATTITUDE CHANGE
CHANGE	SHORT-TERM	GRADUAL LONG-TERM SUSTAINED
TYPES OF ACTIVITIES	FAMILIAR: Workshops, Seminars Panel Discussions Lunchtime seminars Paper Presentations Newsletters Lectures Readings	NON-FAMILIAR: Consultation Organization & Individual Development Team-Building Eval. of Inst. Rewards & Policies Colleague eval., Action Research Mentors, Self-Assessment Student Assessment/Involvement
PLANNING	"OUTSIDE" EXPERTS OR ADMINISTRATION	FACULTY; COLLABORATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE STUDENTS
ATTENDANCE	VOLUNTARY	OUT OF FELT NEED
AUDIENCE	SELF-SELECTED FACULTY VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS	ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT; ACADEMIC DEPT./COLLEGE COLLEGE DEANS
FACULTY ROLE	PASSIVE	ACTIVE
TIME REQUIRED	MODERATE	HIGH
ROLE OF PROGRAM	DIRECTION; COORDINATION	RESOURCE PERSONS FACILITATORS
EVALUATION	ADMINISTRATION; PARTICIPANTS	COLLABORATIVE; FACULTY,STAFF,STUDENTS

term changes in teaching ability or institutional support for teaching. They may, however, be easier to conduct and, as suggested before, be a starting point for developing relationships among faculty members and departments that would result in more targeted types of activities.

As can be also seen by the table, those activities that may produce more sustained change are those that involve faculty, administrators and students in their planning and that result from a felt need, rather than identified by "outsiders." The actual implementation of some of the organization development activities suggested may require the use of facilitators, yet the faculty should take an active role in its conduct, evaluation, and follow-up. The risk and commitment necessary to engage in such activities is great in that institutional policies and practices are examined as well as the conduct of teaching, yet the potential gain is high.

As suggested earlier, it might be helpful to start faculty development efforts on the low risk, more familiar side of the continuum in order to gain credibility and support for any type of program, and then gradually move toward facilitating a more collaborative approach to faculty and institutional development. A workshop for volunteer faculty, conducted by respected internal faculty and staff, which responds to the identified needs of the faculty and uses adult learning principles as a model, might be one way to start a faculty development program. To assist in this process, the following are potential questions to address

when considering a faculty development workshop:

I. Planning the Workshop

o Are core, key faculty involved?

o Is top-level support and commitment evident?

o Have you taken time to talk individually with faculty and garner their support? Do you believe your credibility has been enhanced?

o Have you taken time to sufficiently prepare for success?

o Has a needs or interest assessment of the faculty been conducted?

II. Design of the Workshop

o If the target group is an organizational unit, is the design specific to the area or discipline?

o Are concrete, practical discussions planned?

o Can a supportive group climate be maintained?

o Is there active involvement of the participants? Have activities been planned that ensure success?

o Is there a positive tone created? Are you concentrating on the participants' strengths?

o Does your design lead to specific steps the faculty can take after the workshop?

o Does it take into account the experiences of the participants in working with different populations of students?

o Does the design model what it's trying to teach about teaching?

III. Implementation of the Workshop

o Is participation in the workshop voluntary?

o Where is the location of the workshop? Does it have prestige?

o Are in-house, respected faculty being used to conduct the workshop?

o Have participants been "personally" solicited?

o Is the time allotted for the workshop not excessive and convenient?

IV. After the Workshop

o Are you conducting a survey or interview with faculty?

o Are any follow-up activities (instructional skills, consultation, information, etc.) based on faculty interest and need?

o Are you providing faculty with a resource list such as those instructors that are willing to consult with others, a bibliography of helpful references, learning resources available at the institution, etc.

o Is a newsletter on teaching techniques appropriate?

V. Possible Content on a Workshop on Adult Students

o Demographics (How many adult students; who they are; why they're there)

o Differences between "traditional" students (life experiences and development; motivations to learn; academic behavior; problems for adults)

o How age affects learning (changes with age; ability to learn; generational differences; psychological barriers; exams)

o Implications (for professor--counseling role, change to "colleague" status with students; for curriculum--mixed groups of students, different objectives, time schedules, requirements)

As we have seen, most of the large-scale faculty development programs have been initiated during the 1970's and funded by national organizations; during times of financial conservatism, which seems to be the general trend of the 1980's thus far, will faculty development receive sustained attention? K. Patricia Cross (1977) believes that three forces in faculty development efforts--the reformers (change will occur), the analysts (change is necessary but probably won't happen in this century), and the educational conservatives (reform is an attack on college teaching traditions)--will be striving to "kill" each other off in the 1980's. Gaff and Justice (1978) argue that faculty development will continue to be important and vital to the survival of changing institutions, but it will succeed only if it takes a holistic viewpoint that addresses the overall development of the institution. The lessons learned from the pilot projects of the 70's should be used as tools in the development of a new philosophy to address the challenges of excellence and efficiency facing institutions in the 1980's.

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